

With a growing chorus of Republicans calling for a rollback of defense sequester cuts scheduled to take effect in early 2013, Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.) is leading a group of over 80 House Democrats in support of President Obama's threatened veto of any such legislation. Welch and his colleagues oppose unraveling the deal struck in August to raise the debt ceiling – which included the possibility of a sequester – outside of a balanced budget compromise.

Leading the effort with Welch are Reps. George Miller (D-Calif.), Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), Emanuel Cleaver (D-Mo.) and Jim Himes (D-Conn.).

In a letter to President Obama, Welch and his colleagues are rallying behind the President's threatened veto of any legislation that would roll back the sequester. At press conference time, the letter had 85 signatures, a number that is growing by the hour.

"We write in full support of your view that the sequester scheduled to take effect on January 2, 2013 should not be repealed absent an agreement to reduce deficits exceeding the amount to be sequestered," Welch and his colleagues write. "The failure of Congress to act must have consequences. We stand ready to work with you over the next year to put America back on a firm financial footing and will vote to sustain your veto of any effort to repeal all or part of the scheduled sequester."

Several members of Congress have pledged to roll back scheduled defense cuts in the weeks since the failure of the supercommittee, including House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.) and Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.), Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.), Kelly Ayotte (R-N.H.), and Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.). House Armed Services Committee Chairman Buck McKeon (R-Calif.) is set to announce such legislation at a press conference later today.

The full text of the letter is copied below. Current signers include Reps. Welch, Hoyer, G. Miller, Van Hollen, Himes, Cleaver, Polis, Frank, Becerra, Shuler, Schrader, H. Johnson, Boswell, Tsongas, Defazio, Kind, Norton, Farr, Clay, Moore, Filner, Quigley, Cummings, Yarmuth, Speier, Carney, Hastings, Napolitano, Deutch, K. Bass, Meeks, Carnahan, Andrews, D. Davis, L. Richardson, Conyers, Perlmutter, Schwartz, M. Thompson, Velázquez, Olver, John Lewis, Blumenauer, B. Scott, Rangel, Eshoo, H. Clarke, T. Bishop, Honda, F. Wilson, D. Scott, Costa, Matheson, Cardoza, C. Brown, Hanabusa, Roybal-Allard, Dingell, Langevin, Lipinski, Boren, Critz, Fattah, Payne, Gutierrez, Peterson, Sires, McDermott, Y. Clarke, E.B. Johnson, Sherman,

Capps, Matsui, Pallone, Christensen, Carson, Faleomavaega, Rush, Holden, Baca, Maloney, Berman, Schiff, Cohen and Lofgren.

Dear Mr. President,

With the failure of the Super Committee to reach a deficit reduction agreement, we write in full support of your view that the sequester scheduled to take effect on January 2, 2013 should not be repealed or amended absent an agreement to reduce deficits that meets or exceeds the amount to be sequestered. The failure of Congress to act must have consequences. We stand ready to work with you over the next year to put America back on a firm financial footing and will vote to sustain your veto of any effort to repeal all or part of the scheduled sequester.

Sincerely,

PETER WELCH

Member of Congress